

novel process defined by Claims 1-19. Any search conducted for the claimed process would necessarily also disclose the system used to accomplish the process.

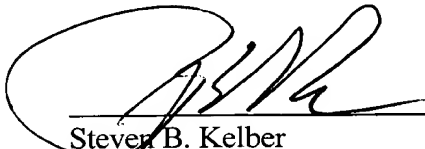
Further, the monitoring system of Claims 20-22, while including the element of a film thickness measuring device, also specifically requires the inclusion of a furnace for oxidizing a nitrided gate oxide layer on a semiconductor substrate as well as a computer element that is adapted to monitor the thickness of the oxidized nitrided gate oxide layer after the oxidation step has been conducted in the furnace of the system. The computer element is also adapted to store the measurements obtained, and to retrieve and analyze those measured thickness values. These required elements of the system cannot be ignored. There is no basis provided by the Examiner to support the assertion that the claimed system could simply measure the film thickness of a silicon dioxide layer without first undergoing some degree of adaptation, disablement of some elements, readaptation of the computer element, etc. Consideration must be given to all of the required elements of the system and the influence that each of those elements might effect on any unclaimed process that the Examiner postulates to be within the capability of the claimed system. The Examiner fails to consider if the furnace of the system would necessarily have to be disabled to achieve a different function such as simply taking a measurement. The specific adaptation of the computer element and the possible need to alter the claimed adaptation in order to achieve a different function is also not addressed by the assertion that the claimed system could be used to simply measure a silicon oxide layer. The present invention provides a novel process that is accomplished by a novel system that is specifically adapted to the requirements of the claimed method. The Examiner provides no basis to support ignoring, disabling, or readapting the required elements of the claimed system so as to accomplish a different process from that which is claimed.

Applicants submit that the application is now in condition for examination on the merits.

Early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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